

Chairs, Labor and Public Employees Committee,

Dear honorable members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee,

I am an anomaly.

I graduated from Wesleyan University yet have devoted my life to a calling that pays peanuts and gets no respect.

For 35 years I have worked in Early Childhood Education.

I have worked in the food service industry and been privileged to work among immigrant and undocumented women.

I have seen first hand the damage that arbitrary and unfair labor practices have on families and, especially, on young children.

It is hard enough for an individual adult to survive on a 40 hour work week at minimum wage.

Imagine how difficult survival becomes when your hours are slashed with no warning.

Those groceries you were going to buy get left on the store shelf. The prescription you hoped to pick up for your child gets put back by the pharmacist.

The existing laws currently in skewed in favor of employers CA and white

I am submitting testimony today to express my support for H.B. 5353, An Act Concerning a Fair Work Schedule - and ask you to vote in favor of this legislation.

Every worker in Connecticut should have access to a stable job that gives them access to opportunity and treats them with respect.

Tens of thousands of workers in Connecticut begin their work week without a schedule. They work "on-call", with unpredictable, fluctuating workweeks which they have no control over.

They cannot rely on their jobs to provide stability or a reliable paycheck. They are denied full-time hours, so they don't receive benefits - and they cannot seek another job, as they don't have a fixed schedule.

The effects are devastating for working families - and this impact has been even more devastating for low-wage workers, especially people of color, who saw their income fall during the pandemic.

Jobs should be a source of stability and opportunity - and workers deserve to be treated with respect.

H.B. 5353 will put an end to these practices, ensuring that more than 140,000 retail, food service, and hotel workers have more predictable schedules and reliable paychecks. The bill will give part-time employees the opportunity to work more hours, requiring employers to offer extra shifts to current workers before hiring additional staff. More than anything, it will ensure that employers treat their employees with respect, setting their schedules in advance and providing compensation for any late changes.

When you can't rely on your job it makes it impossible to pay bills, plan childcare, stay healthy, and get ahead. Connecticut Working Families deserve to have jobs that respect their time - and give them a chance to thrive and prosper.

Connecticut families cannot wait any longer. I strongly urge you to support H.B. 5353, the Fair Workweek bill, this session.

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